

M.

Mephistopheles

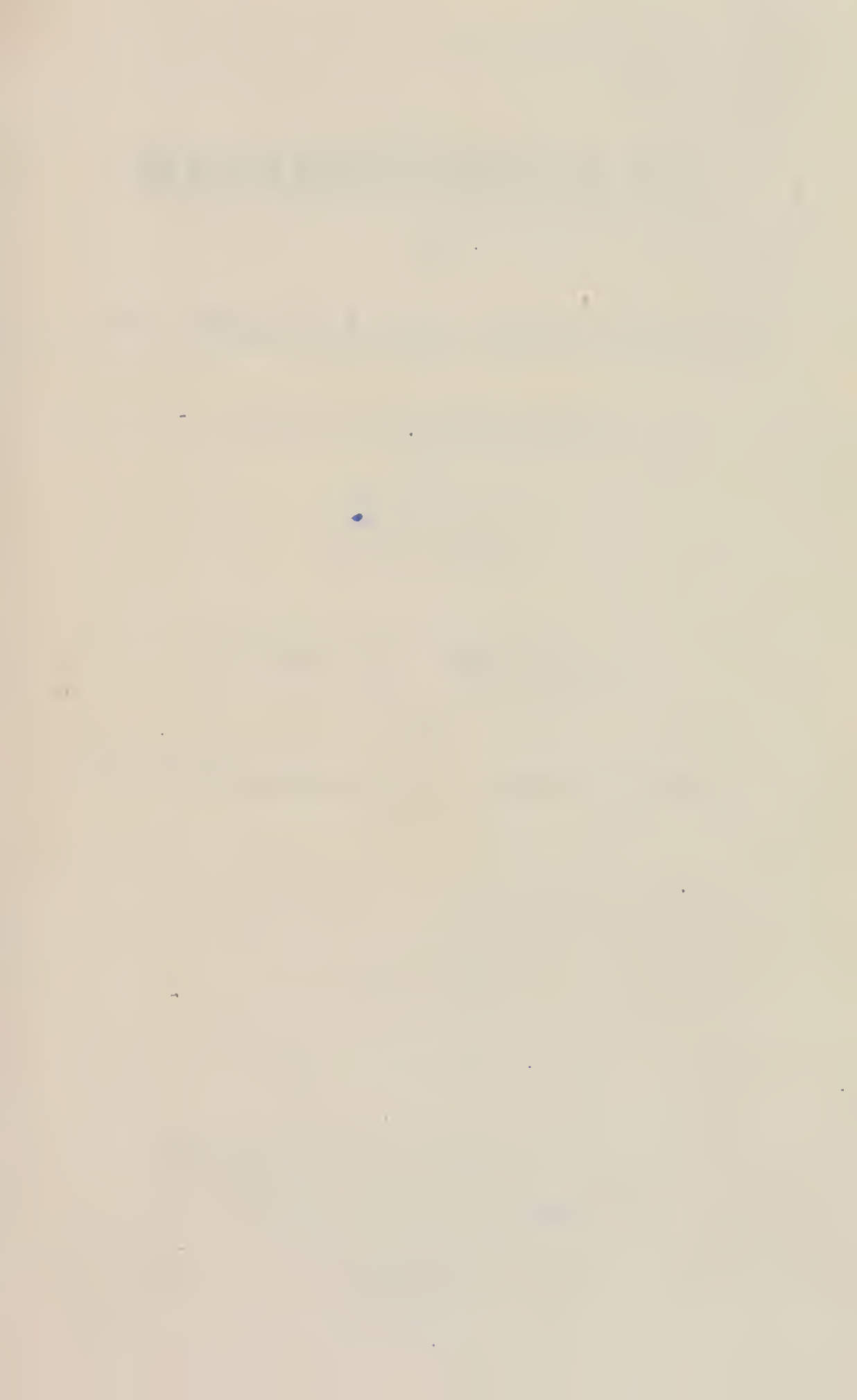
















# MEPHISTOPHELES ;

OR,

## AN AMBASSADOR FROM BELOW

AN EXTRAVAGANZA

IN

ONE ACT

BY

ROBERT BROUGH

AND

SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.

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THOMAS HAILES LACY,

WELLINGTON STREET,

STRAND,

LONDON.

# MEPHISTOPHELES.

*First performed at the Royal Adelphi Theatre.*

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## CHARACTERS.

The Marquis de Brancador	-	-	Mr. G. HONEY.
Fiametta	(the gardener's wife)		Miss FITZWILLIAM
Mephistopheles,	(a young gentleman, nearly related to the Old One—his first appearance in this world)	-	Miss WOOLGAR.
Pepito,	(the gardener's wife's hus- band)	- - - - -	Miss WOOLGAR.
Honesta,	(Marchioness de Bran- cador)	- - - - -	Miss WOOLGAR.

SCENE.—The Marquis de Brancador's Villa, near Naples.

## COSTUMES.

MARQUIS.—Embroidered square-cut coat, long satin waistcoat, and breeches, stockings rolled over the knees, garters, shoes and buckles, full-bottom wig and three-cornered hat.

MEPHISTOPHELES.—Crimson coloured suit, short tunic, tights, pointed shoes, black wig and upturned moustache, high crowned hat with single red feather.

PEPITO.—Blue frock, Swiss braces over white shirt, long gaiters, flaxen hair, round hat.

HONESTA.—White satin and veil.

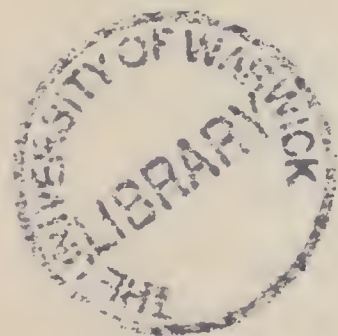
FIAMETTA.—Blue jacket, full-quilted petticoat, broad white apron, large gilt pins through hair.

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NOTE.—It is indispensable that the three characters—Mephistopheles, Pepito, and Honesta, should be played by the same lady. Honesta, on entering at page 10, must be represented by a “substitute” lady, closely veiled. Also when she is seen in the arbour, page 23.

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# MEPHISTOPHELES;

OR,

## AN AMBASSADOR FROM BELOW.

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SCENE.—*Garden attached to the Marquis de Brancador's Chateau. Terrace with balustrade at back, giving a view of an Italian landscape; 2 E. L., door of the villa elevated a few steps; 1 E. R. the gardener's cottage, the door turned towards the spectator; 2 E. R., an arbour of clipped shrubbery, a la Versailles, the entrance to which faces the door of the chateau. Fronting the spectator an opening in the arbour, formed like a window, so as to show all that takes place inside.—A bank. In front, touching the arbour, (a little to the left of the opening, being near the centre of the stage,) a tuft of dahlias, various colours. A rustic table, L., concealing a portion of the villa steps near it—a chair of similar materials.*

*Enter FIAMETTA from the gardener's cottage, R., carrying a large cake, which she places on table, L. A cold fowl, with bread, plates, one knife and fork, cup, and bottle of wine, a large bottle with trick red fire.*

FIAM. There, I consider that cake a success in the way of pastry such as few young housekeepers meet with. I declare it's as soft and delicate as my dear Pepito's curls; as sweet as his lips, and as tender as his heart. (*looking towards the cottage, R. H.*) So, sir, I hope you're spoiled enough. I hope you're satisfied with the way people get up, at all



sorts of hours, to make nice things for your breakfast, while you're snoring away like a piggy-wiggy. (*to herself.*) Well, one may be excused for spoiling a dear little husband, only married a week, as fresh as a daisy, 'as cheerful as a lark—only daisies are in the habit of opening their eyes a good deal earlier than *this* in the morning, and I warrant to say there isn't a lark in all the Marquis's corn fields that hasn't had his breakfast and gone about his business hours ago. It's all very well to be a married man; but people should remember that they ought to be gardeners as well, now and then, and that Marquises don't pay wages for lying in bed. I am sure it's very good of that Marquis de Brancador never to trouble us with a visit—to leave us here to do as we please. Nine o'clock! I declare! It's time for me to give the dahlias their breakfast. (*calling.*) Pepito! Pepito, dear! He doesn't answer. (*opening door of the cottage.*) I declare he's asleep still—the lazy bones! I should like to know what would become of the dahlias if I didn't take some notice of them. (*taking watering-pot.*) Poor things! they look half dead, I declare. I can't think what's come to them, especially this great yellow one. It's very odd. I watered it often enough yesterday; but it looks for all the world as if it had been burnt. Poor dahlias! (*watering them.*) There's something will do you good. (*noise of a coach.*) What's that? Well, I declare! A coach all over ribbons and flowers; and servants all over ribbons and flowers; and a gentleman—oh, isn't *he* all over ribbons and flowers? Suppose it should be master!

*Enter* MARQUIS BRANCADOR *from* L. U. E., *quickly, in wedding costume, followed by* SIX SERVANTS.

1ST SERV. Your lordship—

BRAN. Don't speak to me, I'm agitated—absorbed.

FIAM. (*aside.*) "Your lordship!" It must be master; and Pepito's snoring away there like I don't know what.

BRAN. (*turning brusquely round to* SERVANTS.) Well, what are you standing there for, rascals! vagabonds! ruffians!

1ST SERV. We're waiting for your lordship's orders.







BRAN. "My lordship" is too much agitated to give orders. My agitation will only allow me to say this, that if the orders which I do not think proper to issue are not executed in twenty minutes, those twenty minutes come out of your wages.

1ST SERV. But the keys of the chateau.

BRAN. Ask Pepito, my gardener, for them.

FIAM. (*quickly.*) Here they are. (*giving keys to SERVANTS who enter the villa, L. H.—aside.*) I'd better tell him, though I'm rather frightened. Your lordship!

BRAN. (*not looking.*) What is it? Don't speak to me.

FIAM. Please, your lordship, it's Pepito.

BRAN. (*still not looking.*) Oh, it's Pepito! How are you, Pepito, how are you—how are you?

FIAM. (*aside.*) He takes me for Pepito. (*aloud.*) But I'm not Pepito.

BRAN. (*turning suddenly round and looking at her.*) No! In spite of my agitation and absorption, I can manage to spare time to think you must be right. My little gardener become a woman? Improbable, to say the least of it. I expected to find him grown, but not so much changed as all that comes to. Well, my dear, as you're not Pepito, who are you?

FIAM. Fiametta, your lordship's servant.

BRAN. And how long have you been my lordship's servant, Fiamet-ta? (*aside.*) I like that name. It comes nicely on the tongue—Fiam-met-ta. (*aloud.*) Answer me, Fiamet-ta.

FIAM. Ever since I married Pepito, your lordship's gardener, last week, if you please.

BRAN. What! Pepito married? What does the impudent boy mean?

FIAM. Why your lordship sent him a present of money to get something to make himself smart with.

BRAN. True, Fiametta.

FIAM. And he thought a wife would become him better than anything else, so, if you please, we got married.

BRAN. The dear boy's young for such an important step?

FIAM. (*looking at him.*) Oh, sir, people get married at all sorts of ages.

BRAN. So they do. Perhaps it's even better for a man to marry young. He'll have time to repeat the delightful experiment often.

FIAM. Sir!

BRAN. (*with warmth.*) There's no happiness like it. Where but in married life can we look for unclouded bliss—unbroken calm? Where else seek for that wilderness of joy—that chasm of tranquillity, if I may use the expression, into which it plunges us?

(*walking up and down in an agitated manner.*)

FIAM. Then if you please, sir, how is it you are so agitated and absorbed as you say, since you are married?

BRAN. (*looking at watch.*) Fiametta, I shall have to be agitated and absorbed for five-and-twenty minutes, by which time the marchioness will be here.

FIAM. She is coming? Oh, what news!

BRAN. (L. H.) Yes, Fiametta. Yes, Fiametta, we were joined in the holy bands this morning, in the chapel of my palace at Naples.

FIAM. Is my lady young?

BRAN. Our ages are perfectly proportioned. She's sixteen.

FIAM. Sixteen?

BRAN. Yes, Fiametta.

FIAM. And your lordship is——

BRAN. Forty-four—that is to say, I was yesterday, before the Holy Church blessed me with a gentle being to divide my sorrows and joys with me. We've everything in common now, ages included. Sixteen and forty-four make sixty; twos in sixty—thirty:—thirty years apiece for us. Look at me, Fiametta—I'm thirty!

FIAM. (*aside.*) Poor woman!

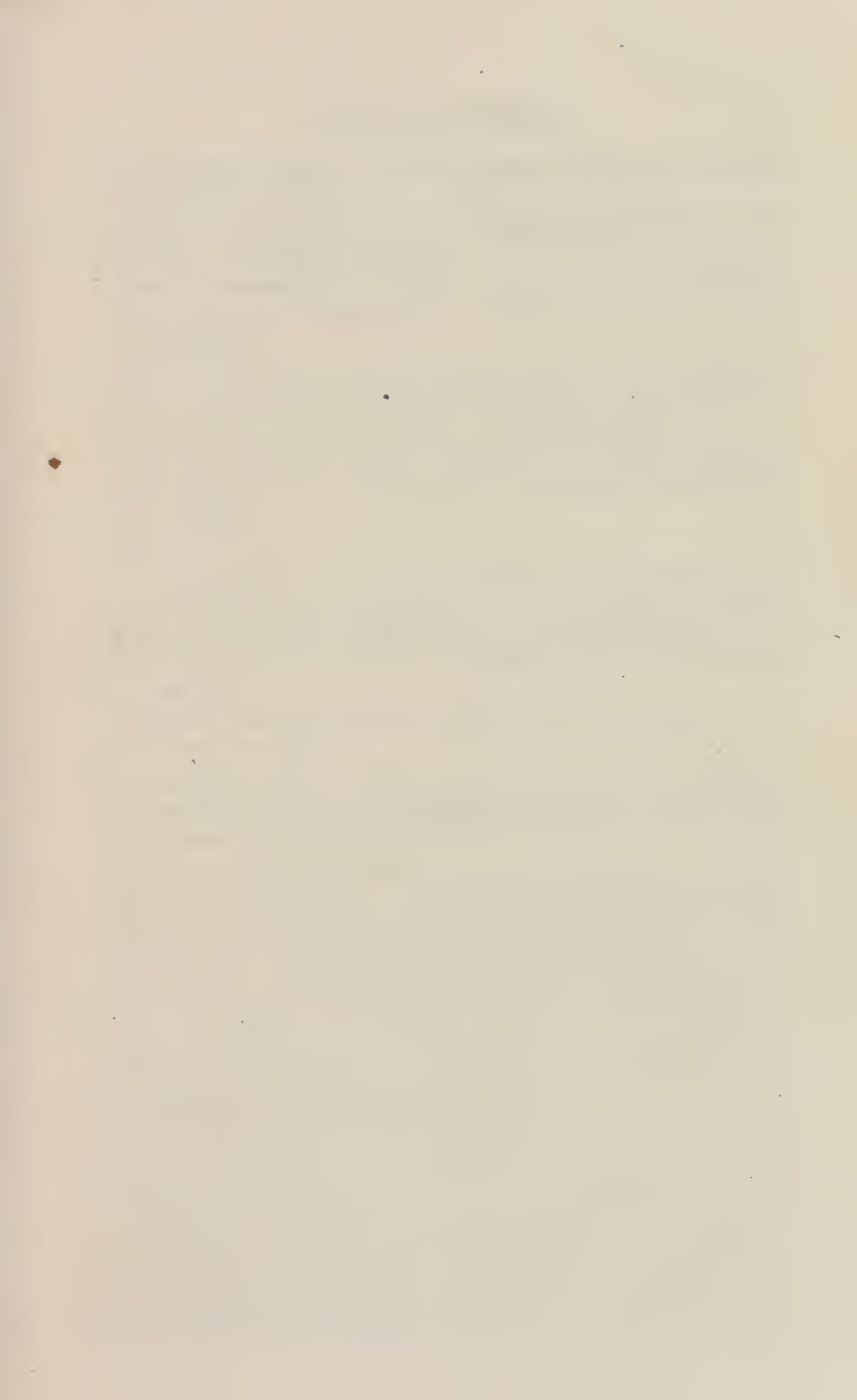
BRAN. As regards the beauty of Honesta—as regards her beauty, I say, I would describe it to you, but that I should be compelled to do so in terms of such exquisite delicacy and fineness, as to realize the idea of—nothing whatever.

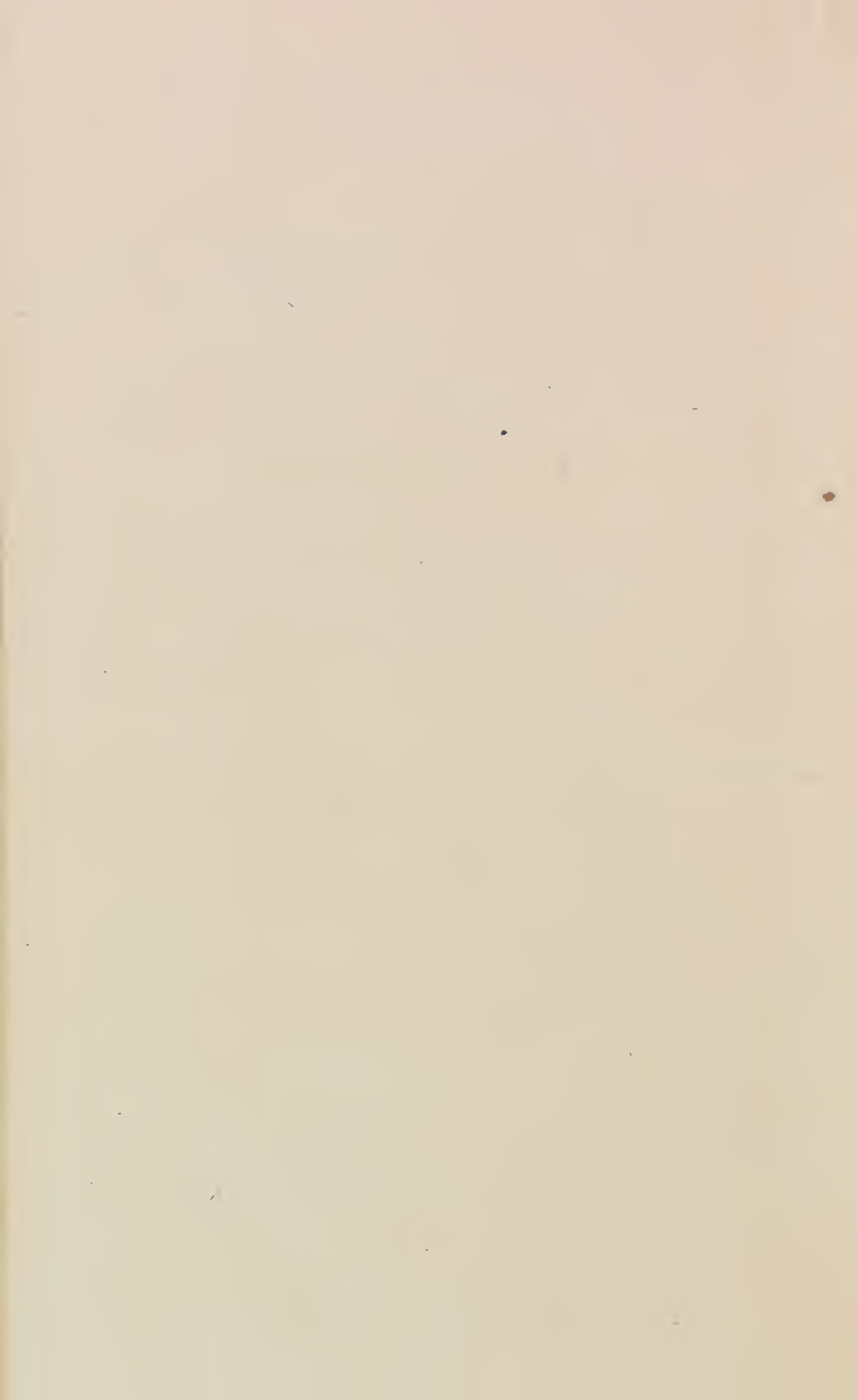
FIAM. How nice!

BRAN. As regards her education, it is perfect. She knows nothing—nothing whatever; in fact she has been brought up in the best convent in all Naples. *Did any-*











body remind me to tell them to put up satin curtains in the reception chamber?

FIAM. I'm not sure, but I'll ask Pepito, if I can only get him to—(*calling.*) Pepito!

BRAN. (*coming down.*) Ah! that suggests a thought and a question. Fiametta!

FIAM. Sir.

BRAN. You love your husband, don't you? It's perfectly indifferent to me, but I wish to know particularly.

FIAM. My dear little Pepito? Oh yes, indeed!

BRAN. Your dear little Pepito! Oh yes, indeed! Good! But I mean you love him exclusively—don't love anybody else?

FIAM. Sir!

BRAN. (*aside.*) She doesn't; good! On my wife's account I ought to be particular; moral—very. It's as well in the country. (*calling as he goes in.*) Did anybody remind me to tell 'em to put up satin curtains in the reception chamber?

[*Exeunt, BRANCADOR into villa, L. H., FIAMETTA into cottage, R. H.*]

*Supernatural music.* MEPHISTOPHELES rises partially in the midst of the clump of dahlias, parts the branches with his hands, and looks round him.

MEPH. (*shivering.*) B—r—r—r! I've had a narrow escape of being frozen. Twice that little jade has been so incautions as to sprinkle me with—ugh! (*shuddering.*) cold water. Cold water, for an individual accustomed to a temperature of four hundred and seventy-five degrees—B-r-r-r! (*springs on the stage with a burst of demoniac laughter.*) Well, at last, here I am—Mephistopheles, prince of the blood of unimpeachable darkness; knight of the Trident, and companion of the Sulphur Bath; an exile upon earth, charged with a diplomatic errand of extreme delicacy. (*laughing.*) I a diplomatist! I who have learned nothing at college but to cultivate a moustache, *a la Mephistopheles*; drive a spanking team of four griffins, and ogle the dear little she-devils, bless 'em! (*sighing.*) Alas! it is that has been the ruin of me. If I hadn't been such a wicked little devil, instead of shivering here on this inhospitable planet, I might, at this moment, be revelling

in the fire-side joys of my imp-hoods at home. But what with debts and peccadillos, I have made my native place too hot to hold me. My only safety was in a colonial appointment, or Foreign Embassy of some kind, (a favourite way, down in our parts, of disposing of young sparks who are good for nothing at home). Of course, with my distinguished connexions, there was no difficulty in procuring such a post. A question of vital importance has long agitated the minds of our political economists, (for we've an immense number of political economists in our latitudes, I assure you);—"Whether, of the quantity of married people daily flocking to our shores, in such numbers as to excite fears of over-population, we are indebted to the husbands for sending the wives there, or to the wives for sending the husbands?" Charged with a Commission of Inquiry on this subject, with anguish in my soul, and funds voted for travelling expences in my pocket, (for they're very liberal of the public money with us,) I started by the first whirlwind. Well, it seems I couldn't have popped on a more favourable spot for my investigations. (*looking at the villa and the gardener's pavilion.*) There are the dwellings of two married couples, just entering on the happy state. By watching their proceedings from the very beginning, I can easily—but no, here is the difficulty. In the honeymoon there is no getting at the real truth; all is tenderness, amiability, and complacence. While the sugar lasts, they don't think of tapping the vinegar. (*quickly.*) Ha! a thought! What's the use of being a devil if we can't avail one's self of the privilege of one's order? Why not take some of their plans myself? Let them have the devil in them—literally, as the saying is. Courage, Mephistopheles! the eyes of Pandemonium are upon you. Prove yourself worthy of the distinguished trust reposed in you. The youthful Pepito is asleep in the pavilion; the innocent Honesta is expected every moment. Those two shall serve for my experiences. But how to introduce myself delicately into their bodies. Ha! (*goes up to table R. H.*) That cake, destined by Fiametta for her husband's breakfast. All I have to do is to establish myself inside of it, and at the first mouthful he swallows, exit the clumsy







identity of Pepito from his bodily dwelling, and enter the more refined spirit of Mephistopheles. I shan't like it; but a diplomatist mustn't mind letting himself down a little, now and then. (*he stands on the table and waves wand.*)

INVOCATION.—*From "Robert the Devil."*

Great Pluto! Asmodeus!  
 Rhadamanthus profound!  
 My potent connexions  
 I invoke all round.  
 Do your utmost with mischief,  
 Deception and strife,  
 For a poor little devil  
 Just starting in life.

(MEPHISTOPHELES *sinks into it gradually during the following—*

SUBTERRANEAN CHORUS.

Child of darkness, undaunted  
 Proceed with your task;  
 Your relations watch o'er you.  
 The help that you ask  
 Shall be granted. Of the regions  
 Infernal, all eyes  
 Are upon you: triumph boldly!  
 Our hopes realise.

*When he has disappeared, enter FIAMETTA, R., running.*

FIAM. Hey-day, what's all this? Who's coming now?

BRAN. (*running in from L. in a state of excitement to her side.*) 'Tis she! She's come! she's come!

FIAM. My lady—the marchioness?

BRAN. Yes, Fiamet-ta! (*pulling her up to the balustrade, and pointing over.*) Look! Do you see that coach? That's my wife. Do you see those two mules? That's my—no, I mean to say—

FIAM. Yes, yes—I see her. She's getting out.

BRAN. And I not there to assist her. (*greatly excited.*)

Where are my lackeys? Holloa! my lackeys! Holloa!  
all my lackeys!

SIX SERVANTS *enter, L. H.*

There — stand in a row! (*placing them in a rank up the stage, R.*) With extended arms, radiant eyes, and a rapturous smile on the lips—so. (*smiling winningly.*) And are you all perfect in the chorus? (SERVANTS *bow assent.*) Good! Let's see. (*sings to a ridiculous air.*)

“Joy attend the blushing bride.”

No. (*sings aloud to another tune.*) “Joy attend the—”  
Nor that.

FIAM. (*quickly.*) She's here!

BRAN. Yes, Fiamet-ta! (*runs out precipitately, L. U. E.*)

CHORUS.—“*Eclipse Polka.*”

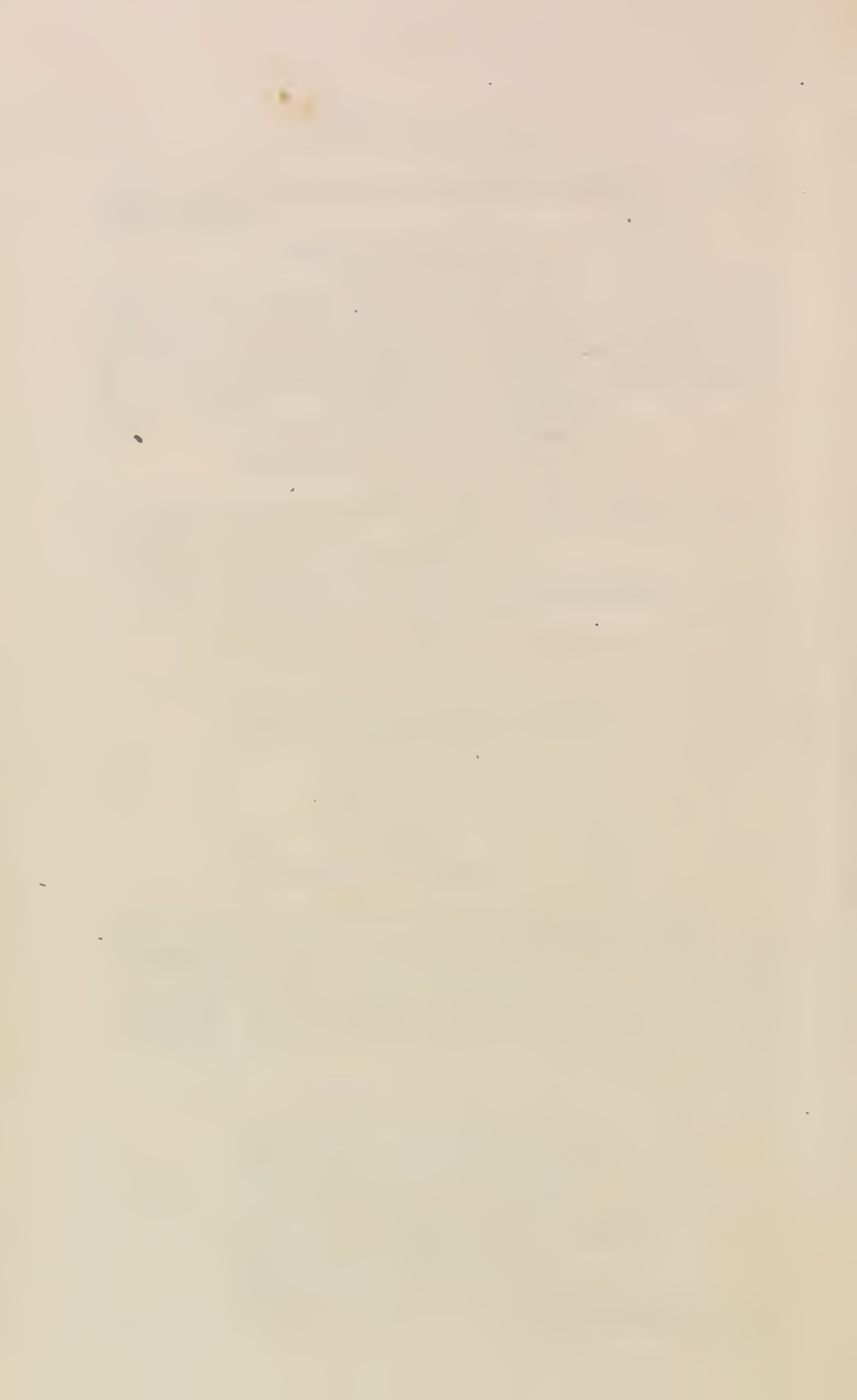
Joy attend the blushing bride!  
May the seasons, as they glide,  
Every hour  
Shower  
Pleasures,  
Treasures,  
On Brancador's bride!

BRANCADOR *re-enters, L. U. E. conducting HONESTA—represented, in this instance, by a substitute lady. She is in bridal costume, wearing a large veil, which she folds carefully over her face. BRANCADOR sings tenderly to HONESTA, who shrinks away from him timidly.*

SONG.—BRANCADOR.

Virgin pure, thy veil respecting,  
Like a cloud a star protecting,  
I obey—with joy, expecting  
Bliss—a husband-lover's right:  
When alone, its folds away,  
On my knees you'll hear me say—  
*(searching for a word.*





(PEPITO *sings at the top of his voice from the pavilion,*  
B. H.

Tra la la la la lia—  
Tra la li-e-ty, &c.

Franz, the Strasburgh Grenadier,  
Swopped his wife for a schoppe of beer.  
Tra la li-ety, la lie-ety, &c.

BRAN. (*astonished.*) Certainly not. I've no intention of saying anything of the kind. Who is the impertinent tenor presuming to take such liberty?

(HONESTA *shrinks away at the sound of Pepito's voice, gathering her veil more closely over her face.*

FIAM. If you please, it's Pepito. Have you any objection?

BRAN. Most decidedly. (*calling out.*) Pepito, be quiet. (*to HONESTA, with extreme tenderness.*) Come, dove of simplicity, and take possession of your perch. (*conducting HONESTA, he turns round suddenly to the domestics.*) How now, vagabonds! The chorus—very loud, on penalty of a month's wages.

(*chorus resumed.*) "Joy attend the blushing bride," &c.

(BRANCADOR *enters the chateau, L. conducting HONESTA. The domestics follow, singing.*

FIAM. Well, I'm sure! not to allow my dear little Pepito to sing—old sulky!

(PEPITO *saunters out of the pavilion, his hands in his pockets, singing very loudly.*)

Tra la li-ety, &c., &c., &c.

Franz, the Strasburgh Grenadier,

FIAM. (*putting her hand before his mouth.*) Will you be quiet?

PEPITO. (*catching her hand, and devouring it with kisses.*) Oh, how nice! (*singing louder than ever.*)

Swopped his wife for a schoppe of beer,  
Tra la la la, &c.

FIAM. Again! Do hold your tongue, will you?



PEPITO. (*chop-fallen.*) What! don't you like poor little hubby's song?

FIAM. Of course *I* do. But there are others who don't.

PEPITO. (*caressingly.*) Others! What are others to me? I don't know any others than my little woman.

(*putting his hand on her shoulder.*)

FIAM. Stupid! (*pushing him away playfully.*) There—go along. Yes—others, I tell you. The marquis is come.

PEPITO. (*with stupid astonishment.*) No!

FIAM. Yes—and has brought the new marchioness.

PEPITO. (*in the same style.*) No!

FIAM. And there's to be a fête in the village in honour of their marriage.

PEPITO. No!

FIAM. (L. H.—*impatiently.*) Have you lost your wits

PEPITO. (R. H.) No! (*a movement of impatience from FIAMETTA.*) Well then, I won't say it again. I'll be good.

FIAM. Well, he is obedient, then. It's a good little poodle-dog I've married, who does everything as he is bid. (*patting him on the head.*)

PEPITO. (*tenderly.*) Yes; a little poodle-dog, who gave you his paw.

FIAM. There. We mustn't idle away the day, or the marquis won't be pleased. Now listen, like a good boy, and I'll give you your instructions for the day. You must take your hoe and your rake, and work at the celery beds till three o'clock. Then come home and put on your nice new vest, and the pretty cravat I've worked you; and, if you are very good, you may take me to the fête.

PEPITO. You shall see how good I'll be. (*shoulders his gardening tools.*)

FIAM. (*to herself.*) I'm sure I've been very fortunate in such a good little husband—I who could never bear to be contradicted.

PEPITO. (*coming forward to her with his tools on his shoulders.*) Good bye, little woman—kiss.

FIAM. Is he going without his breakfast? Did the little silly forget his breakfast, then?







PEPITO. No; but in your instructions for the day, you didn't mention breakfast.

FIAM. Was he obedient, then? (*running into the pavilion, R. H.*) As if I could forget my little husband's breakfast. Look there.

PEPITO. (*clapping his hands.*) A fowl!

FIAM. And now, look there.

PEPITO. A cake!

FIAM. Yes, my own making. And now sit down.

(*placing a chair R. H. of table.*)

PEPITO. No.

FIAM. What?

PEPITO. It's the wife's place to sit down—the husband's to wait upon her. That's my idea of things.

FIAM. (*patting him on the cheek.*) Did he spoil his little woman, then? There, we'll make room for two.

PEPITO. No, you on the chair; I on the ground—at your feet. It's the little poodle-dog's place.

(FIAMETTA *sits*; PEPITO *sits on the ground at her feet, his head in her lap.*)

FIAM. There—the wing for you.

PEPITO. No, again! The wing for the wife, the leg for the husband; that's my idea of things. Give me the leg.

FIAM. There, then, nibble away. (*crying out as with pain.*) Oh, you are nibbling my fingers instead of the fowl.

PEPITO. It's much better. (*kissing her hand, and eating at the same time.*)

FIAM. (*looking at him affectionately.*) I declare, to see how happy we are, is enough to set all the world marrying each other.

PEPITO. (*his mouth full.*) And eating roast fowl.

FIAM. If my father could only see us.

PEPITO. (*respectfully.*) Ah! your venerable father, with his white beard—(*eating.*) so venerable; and his old hat—so venerable!

FIAM. You love him?

PEPITO. And respect him. When he said to me—“Pepito, will you marry Fiametta?”

FIAM. What, didn't you think of me till he asked you?

PEPITO. Oh, yes ; but I didn't dare to mention it. At the first word, I said "It's a bargain, father-in-law ;" and we went to the old notary's, and we signed something or other.

FIAM. (*caressing him.*) Our contract.

PEPITO. I don't know—I didn't read it.

FIAM. (*astonished.*) No?

PEPITO. (*kneeling and looking up to her face.*) No. I had my eyes on you all the time.

FIAM. (*patting him on the head.*) Poor boy ! And he didn't know that his little woman had scarcely any fortune to bring him.

PEPITO. No fortune?

FIAM. No ; it was a mere nothing.

PEPITO. I should like to hear anybody else say so.

AIR.—" *Ton joli nom.*"

What you brought

My little spouse,

Quick as thought

I'll let you know :

Fifty curls,

Two pretty brows,

Teeth like pearls,

All in a row.

Two little hands,

One little nose,

Two staring eyes,

(*touching the various features playfully as he indicates them.*)

Whose sunny lands

What corn that grows,

Half such a prize.

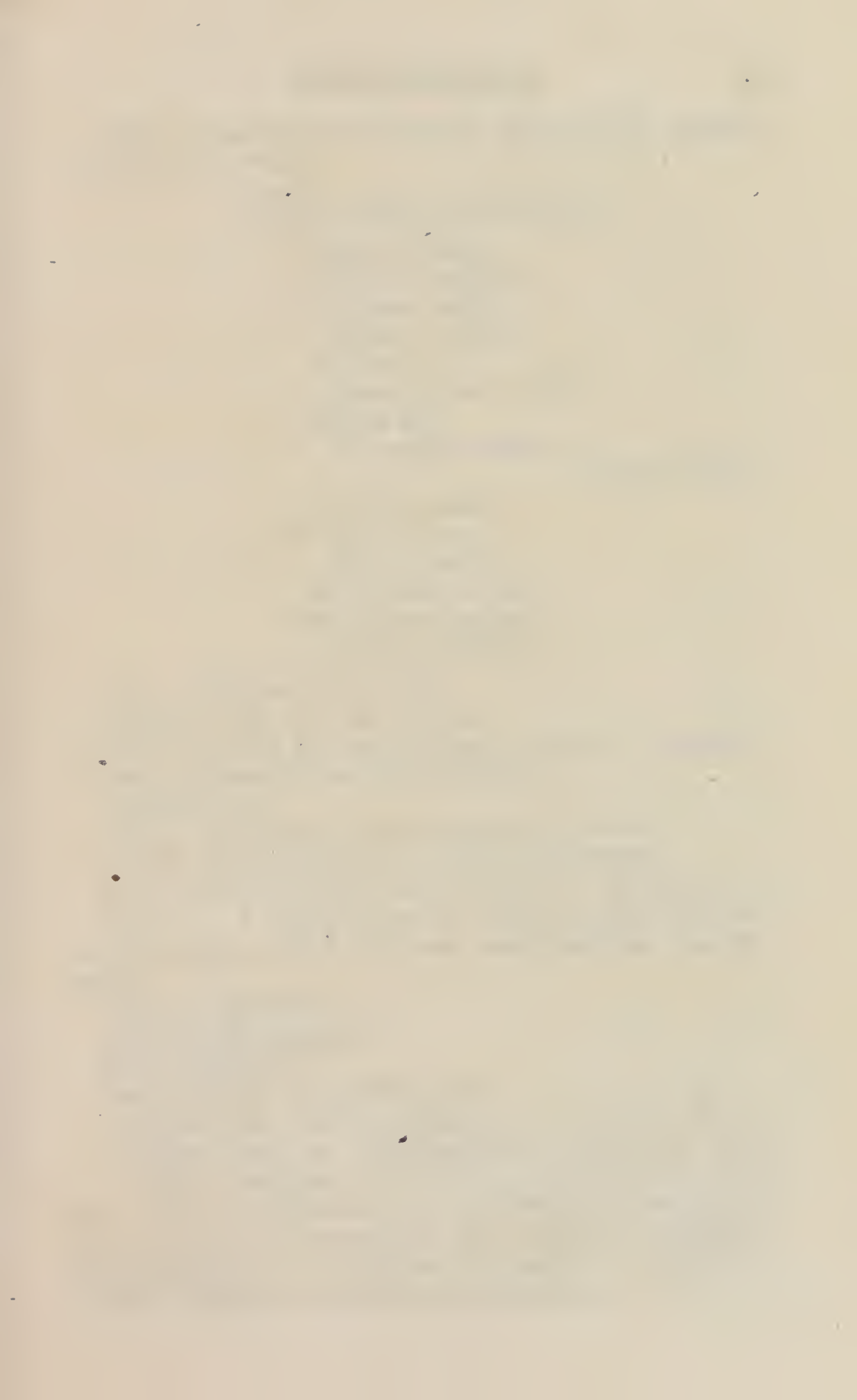
(*putting his hand on her waist, and looking tenderly into her face.*)

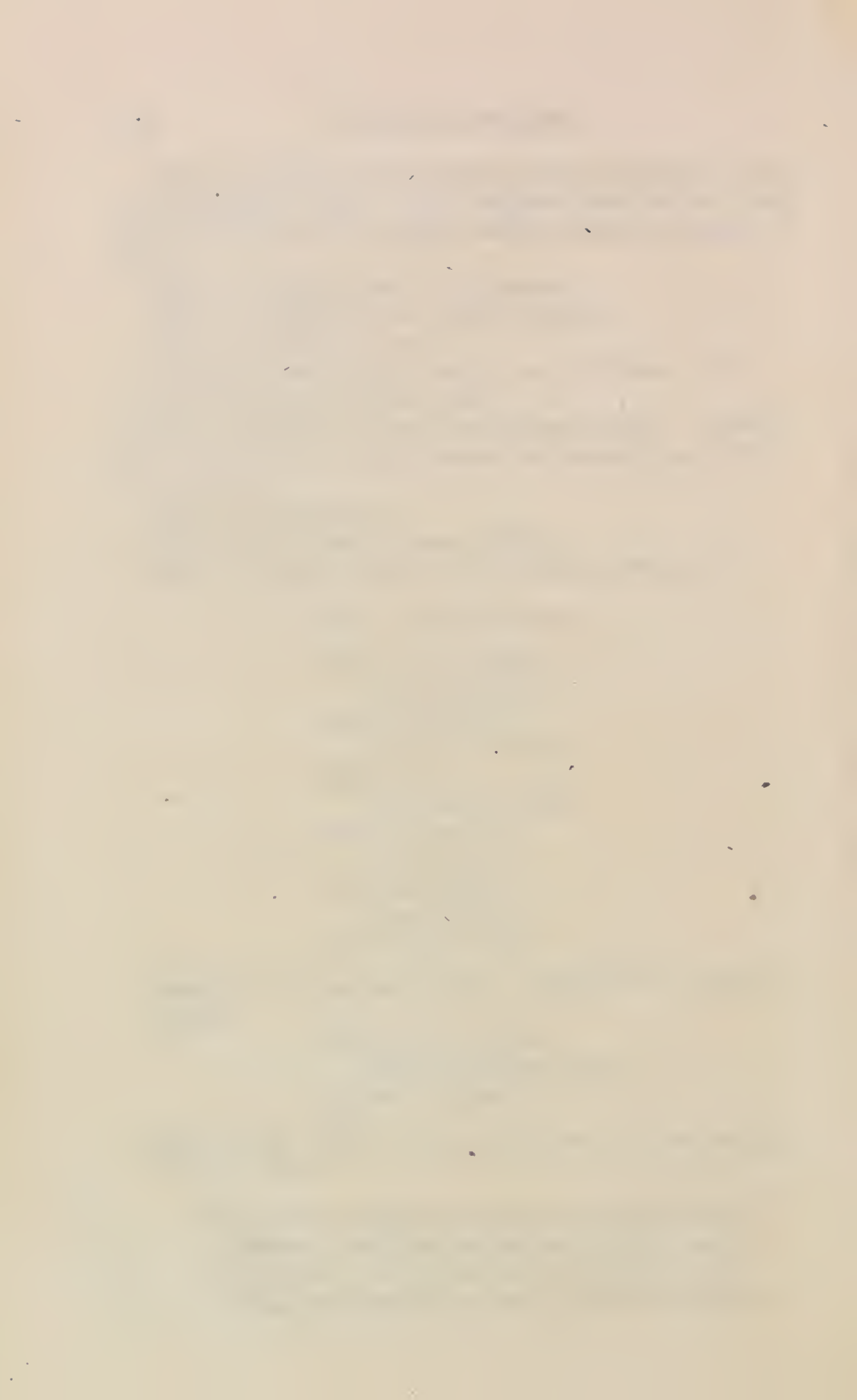
Not all the gold in the king's waistcoat pocket,

Forests could buy half as rich as your hair ;

Not all the gems in the queen's Sunday locket,

With your bright lips can a moment compare.





FIAM. (*speaking rapturously.*) We are the happiest couple in the world.

*Together—(first part of tune.)*

Happy thought  
 'Twas to espouse.  
 Who first taught  
 Folks to express  
 And obey  
 Sweet Hymen's vows,  
 Day by day  
 We ought to bless.

*(joining hands.)*

Two little hands,  
 Two little hearts,  
 Thus to unite—  
 What treasure lends,  
 What wealth imparts  
 Half such delight!

FIAM. And now for the cake.

PEPITO. Yes—now for the cake.

FIAM. (*cutting the cake.*) Why—I declare. I expected to find it quite cold, and it's boiling hot.

PEPITO. Lor!

FIAM. There, there's the best cut of the crust.

PEPITO. Then the best cut of the crust for you.

FIAM. No—this time I will be obeyed. Take it, sir.

PEPITO. I obey—give it me. (*tasting it, and making a face.*) Well, if your cake hasn't the queerest taste—

FIAM. Almonds?

PEPITO. No—sulphur!

FIAM. Sulphur?

PEPITO. Stop! Let's make sure.

*(the orchestra executes, piano, the air of the Demon Chorus sung on Mephistopheles entering the cake.*

*PEPITO swallows a whole mouthful, and cries out.)*

No! I was not deceived! Fire circulates through my veins.—I seem to have drunk rum that's had brimstone matches steeped in it. (*laughs.*) No matter, its capital for all that. (*laughs—the music stops suddenly.*)



FIAM. Stupid boy, to want to frighten his little woman, when I thought—

(*She is about to sit down when PEPITO, with an air of assurance and decision, displaying a marked contrast to his present demeanour, takes her by the arm, twists her round, and sits in her place—looking at her authoritatively.*)

PEPITO. I beg your pardon, that's the husband's place—there's the wife's.

FIAM. (*astonished.*) What? (*half laughing.*) You nonsensical fellow.

PEPITO. (*thumping on the table, and holding out his glass.*) Wine!

FIAM. What! Do you mean that I—

PEPITO. It's the wife's duty to wait on the husband.

FIAM. (*pouring out the wine.*) Very well—there, now my health.

PEPITO. Good! (*drinking.*) My health.

FIAM. Now, papa's health.

PEPITO. (*putting his glass down.*) Not exactly.

FIAM. What?

PEPITO. It's against my interest, as he only put four hundred ducats in the contract, and I shan't be able to touch a farthing of the rest till he's dead. I can't conscientiously drink long life to him.

FIAM. (*astonished.*) What! I thought you said you didn't read our contract on our wedding day.

PEPITO. No more I did.

FIAM. Well then?

PEPITO. Because I took good care to read it the night before. What an old swindler your father is.

FIAM. And just now you said he was so venerable.

PEPITO. Oh, as venerable as you please; but certainly a swindler; see how he's done me.

FIAM. Horrible! Then it was for my money you married me; you who said it was for my eyes—that were so large.

PEPITO. The ducats are twice the size.

FIAM. And my white skin.

PEPITO. Can't approach the whiteness of the silver.

FIAM. It's frightful. It's—(*bursting into laughter.*)







Ha, ha, ha! what a simpleton I was to be taken in. It's a joke, isn't it. (*going up to him.*)

PEPITO. (*rising and kissing her coolly.*) There, go along.

FIAM. Ah, that's right; I was sure of it! A silly fellow! Now go to his work, and I'll make haste and finish breakfast. (*putting a rake and hoe on PEPITO's shoulder.*) There, go to the celery beds like a good boy.

PEPITO. Eh? There's some mistake here. (*putting the tools on FIAMETTA's shoulder.*) That's more like it. Go to the celery beds, little woman, as quickly as possible.

(*he brings the chair negligently to the front, sits cross-legged on it, leaning on the back; takes out a pipe, and tinder box, with flint and steel, from the table; the tinder box has a hole in the bottom, which he places over a hole in the stage for red fire to come up, fills his pipe, strikes a light; red fire comes up through the hole, and he lights his pipe.*)

FIAM. (*weeping.*) Would anybody believe it! Not a minute ago he was all good nature and obedience! The little monster! (*throwing tools down.*) I won't put up with it! I won't go to the celery beds! I'll put on my very best gown, and run to the village fête this minute.

PEPITO. There's another trifling mistake, the fête's my department; I'm going there.

FIAM. It's too much! And you expect me—

PEPITO. To fetch the blacking brushes, and put the curling tongs in the fire, so that you may be enabled to dress my hair as soon as you've polished my shoes.

FIAM. (*with suppressed rage.*) Polish your shoes?

PEPITO. (*coolly.*) First! and then dress my hair.

FIAM. I won't.

PEPITO. (*calmly.*) Madame Pepito! I request you politely to set about those preparations for my toilet that I have named.

FIAM. I'm deaf.

PEPITO. Very good! I see I must appeal to an organ more sensitive than the ear. (*he knocks the head off the hoe and brandishes the handle.*) Madame Pepito.

FIAM. (*terrified.*) Oh!

PEPITO. I thought I could rely on that expedient.

FIAM. You're a monster.

DUETT.—“*Finale to the Quadrille in the Violin du Diable*”

FIAM. Have a care such conduct frightful,  
Vengeance on itself will call,  
Though demure, I can be spiteful,  
You shall pay for all.

PEPITO. (*laughing.*) Have a care, your master rightful  
Please, obey, in all,  
Or a husband's vengeance frightful  
On your head shall fall.

PEPITO. (*showing her the stick.*) Madame Pepito, the  
blackening brushes.

DUETT.—(*resumed.*)

FIAM. (*going reluctantly into the pavilion.*) I declare it's  
awful.

PEPITO. Awful?  
Stuff! Abroad to roam  
Is the husband's province lawful,  
Wives to work at home.

FIAMETTA *re-enters with the brushes, &c.*

PEPITO. Have a care, &c.

FIAM. Have a care, &c.

(*the orchestra continues piano during the following.*)

FIAM. (*reluctantly.*) Put your foot up on the chair.

PEPITO. Not exactly. (*sits down.*) On your knees,  
Madame Pepito! That's the proper way of doing things.

FIAM. Never!

PEPITO. (*making a movement to take up the stick.*)  
Madame Pepito.

FIAM. (*frightened.*) Ah!

(*she kneels down and commences cleaning his shoes.*)

PEPITO. Or stay, we'd better leave the shoes till the  
last thing. They may get soiled; I'll be curled first.

FIAM. (*quickly fetching a napkin from the table.*) Hold  
up your head.

(*She puts the napkin round his neck as hairdressers do,  
and ties him tightly to the back of the chair.*)

PEPITO. (*with stifling cries.*) Oh! Help! I'm choking.











(FIAMETTA takes hold of the back legs of the chair, lifts him up in the chair at back, pushes him struggling into the house, locking the door upon him.)

AIR.—(*resumed.*)

Now, sir, there, my vengeance rightful,  
On your head begins to fall,  
Till of meek repentance quite full,  
You may thump and bawl.

PEPITO. (*knocking at the door, R. H.*) Fiametta! Fiametta! Open the door.

FIAM. No, no! not until you have begged my pardon. (*to herself.*) And even then there's not much chance of my forgiving him. Women talk of such things, but that is all; and the first opportunity I have of punishing him—I shall not be long about it.

*Enter BRANCADOR, L. in a state of ecstasy.*

BRAN. Oh! what delightful innocence! What child-like purity! She positively did not know how to take my arm, and has never walked two steps with a man in her life. Thank heaven, I at last persuaded her to meet me near this delightful arbour, (*points to the arbour.*) where I intend presenting her with the most—(*perceiving FIAMETTA*) Who is there?

FIAM. Only Fiametta, sir!

BRAN. Oh! Is it you, my dear—what do you want?

FIAM. I want vengeance, sir.

BRAN. Vengeance! Dear me, what a dreadful word to utter when I am full of the most genial thoughts. And on whom do you wish to be revenged?

FIAM. On my husband, sir.

BRAN. What! Pepito? And what has Pepito been doing?

FIAM. He told me I was ugly.

BRAN. Dear me—dear me!

FIAM. Now is that true, sir?

BRAN. I don't know. I am really not capable of judging under present circumstances. I am expecting my wife most anxiously.

FIAM. (*showing her neck.*) He told me that my skin was dark.

BRAN. Well, it may be the case! Although from a hasty glance I should say the contrary. But I can't swear to it, for as I told you, I am anxiously expecting my wife.

FIAM. And he said dreadful things about my eyes.

BRAN. As for that he is quite wrong, and I could tell you you had beautiful eyes, if I were not expecting my wife.

FIAM. And he told me—

BRAN. I have no time, my dear, to attend to these statistics when I expect my wife every minute.

FIAM. (*going to back of stage.*) Very well, sir, I shall go away.

BRAN. (*still preoccupied.*) Do so! I don't know whether I told you, but I am—

FIAM. Yes, sir, you are expecting your wife. You did mention it to me.

BRAN. Heavens, here she is.

ENSEMBLE.—AIR,—“*No. 4 of the Quadrille from the Violin du Diable.*”

BRAN. Here's my wife so you must leave me,  
Howsoever it may grieve me,  
I'm quite sure that you'll believe me  
When I tell you, you must go.

FIAM. Here's your wife, but pray believe me,  
When I tell you how 'twill grieve me  
If unkindly now you leave me  
To be spurned by Pepito.

BRAN. Any narration,  
Of your vexation  
Might suggest some indignation,  
Wives should never know.

(*After which, exit FIAMETTA at the back, R. U. E., as HONESTA descends the steps leading to the villa L. HONESTA is veiled as before, and walks very slowly, with her eyes towards the ground.*)





BRAN. (*aside.*) What chasteness! what modesty! and to think that for me alone that veil will be raised. Let me give her an agreeable surprise. (*he advances on tiptoe, and suddenly stops before her.*)

HON. (*with a slight shriek.*) Ah! excuse me, sir, I did not see you.

BRAN. And were you frightened?

HON. (*timidly.*) Frightened! no! not exactly—but I am timid—and the appearance of a gentleman—

BRAN. (*aside with delight.*) What delightful innocence! the idea of her being frightened by the appearance of a gentleman! and by my appearance, above all, which is usually considered prepossessing. (*aloud.*) You must not be too timid, Honesta.

HON. No, sir.

BRAN. And there will be no impropriety in your addressing your husband by such titles as “My love”—“My poppet.”

HON. No, sir.

BRAN. Then, with regard to our other domestic arrangements in which reform appears to be necessary, let us begin by removing the veil; let us draw aside the curtain which conceals so beautiful a picture.

HON. (*allows him to remove her veil.*) Are you satisfied, sir?

BRAN. Satisfied, Honesta! you can have no idea of the state I am in. You appear to be acquainted with human nature only from the feeble specimen of it which I present.

HON. Oh no; I was acquainted with some young ladies at the convent, sir.

BRAN. Young ladies! Yes, but I was not thinking of that portion of human nature; I alluded more particularly to the male department. Now tell me, have you never met any gentleman before?

HON. (*interrupting.*) Gentlemen! where? (*she attempts to lower her veil, but is prevented doing so by BRANCADOR.*)

BRAN. Oh, no, no. There are none near here. (*aside.*) I may as well encourage her in her innocence. (*aloud.*) The fact is, I am the only one living; people attempted to get up a story about there being a great many others, but



the report was soon contradicted. But tell me, did they really teach you nothing in your convent? (*as if correcting himself.*) not that I blame such a system of education by any means.

HON. They taught us to read homilies, and to play psalms on the harpsichord.

BRAN. And did you confine yourself entirely to those excellent pursuits, and never entertain any other thoughts or desires?

HON. (*with hesitation.*) Oh, yes, I did once, but you must forgive me. I know it was very wrong, and was not allowed, and I have reproached myself with it ever since.

BRAN. (*aside.*) What can this be?

HON. (*continuing, and lowering her voice.*) I told the secret to one of my most intimate friends, and we brought up the little thing together.

BRAN. What was it, in Heaven's name?

HON. Oh, I dare not tell you. It died in a very short time.

BRAN. (*much agitated.*) Honesta, tell me the whole truth.

HON. It was a little white mouse, which we kept in our bed-room.

BRAN. You must have been very fond of it.

HON. I was, and I have often hoped—(*pauses.*)

BRAN. Yes, my dear, you often hoped—

HON. (*lowering her eyes.*) That my husband would allow me to keep another.

BRAN. (*anxiously.*) What! another husband!

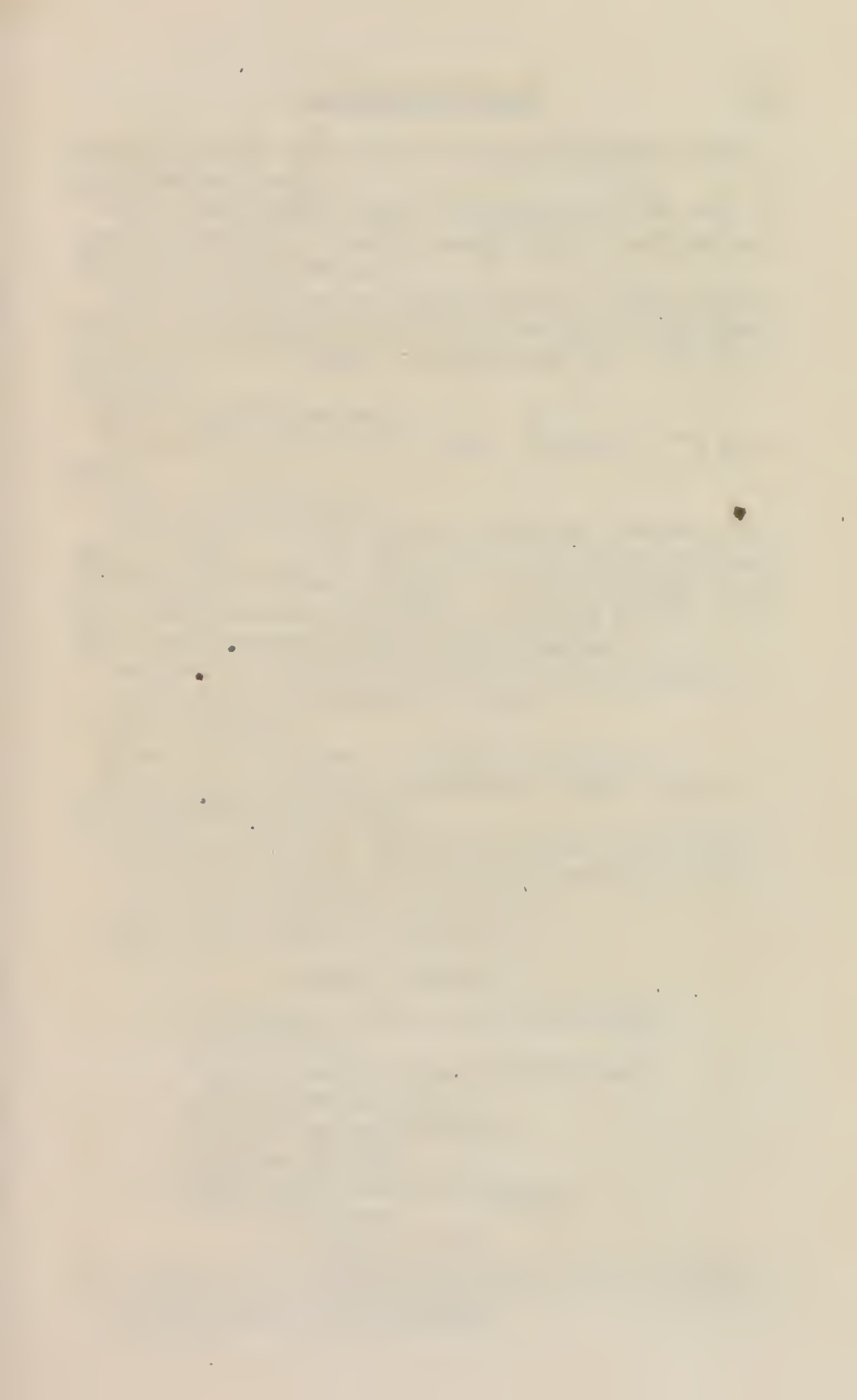
HON. No, another white mouse!

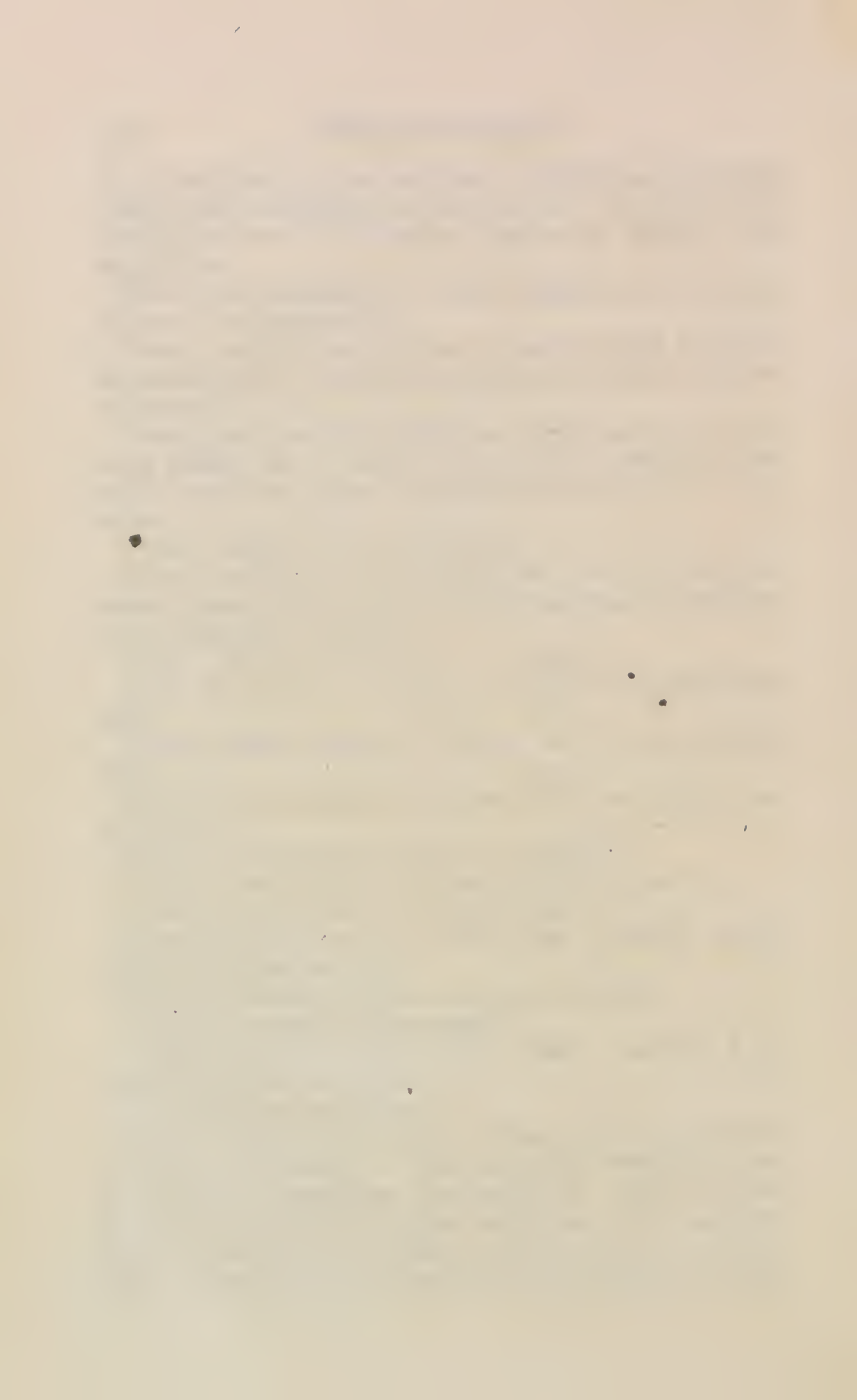
BRAN. Oh yes—another white mouse. (*aside.*) Eve, absolutely, before the apple.

HON. Will you not allow it?

BRAN. Allow it—certainly. You shall keep swarms of them if you desire it. But you must remember, my love, that the happiness of married life doesn't consist entirely in bringing up these interesting little animals. They contribute to it, no doubt; but they are not everything. For instance, you will have the pleasure of the







toilet, and when you see the diamond necklace I have purchased for you—

HON. (*interrupting him.*) Diamonds! oh, no, sir, I never wear them. I was not brought up with any notions of vanity and extravagance.

BRAN. Well, never mind that for the present; there are one or two minor matters which we may as well study together. For instance, to begin with, say “My dear husband.”

HON. My dear husband.

BRAN. Very good, now then. (*dictating.*) “I love you.”

HON. I—I can’t say it.

BRAN. Not quite so good. We must practice that verb a little. In the next place you put your hand in that of your “Dear husband” in this manner; you lean gently towards him—incline your head a little, and the audacious monster taking mean advantage—

(*endeavours to kiss HONESTA, who cries out, lowers her veil, and rushes towards the arbour.*)

BRAN. Honesta!

HON. No. Leave me! (*enters the arbour.*)

BRAN. (*aside.*) She has entered the arbour. Let me rush in pursuit of innocence.

(*he enters the arbour, and makes HONESTA, the double, who still keeps her veil lowered, sit down by his side. At first she endeavours to get away.*)

BRAN. Stay, Honesta; listen to me.

AIR,—“HERVE.”

Look around. How each envious flower,  
As if it knew  
You were here, in this beautiful bower,  
Hides from our view;  
The birds no longer singing  
Jealous of thee,  
Their way to roost are winging,  
List then to me.

Ah, ah, ah, &c.

(*at this moment MEPHISTOPHELES puts his head through the door of the pavilion.*)

MEPH. Ah! I have taken advantage of Pepito's sleep to leave his contemptible human body. I must now look out.

BRAN. (*to HONESTA.*) Well, do you not answer me?

MEPH. The very couple I was in search of.

BRAN. You don't answer? Never mind—I am determined to please you, to delight you.

MEPH. How shall I manage matters with Honesta?

BRAN. (*half aside, and putting his hand in his pocket.*) Look, love.

MEPH. I am much obliged to the husband for the idea.  
(*disappears.*)

BRAN. (*on his knees and offering the necklace.*)

On my knees let me offer politely  
Gems of rare size,  
Though I swear that they sparkle less brightly  
Than thy bright eyes.  
With thee in rich attiring,  
None shall compare,  
While all the world admiring,  
Sing thee this air.  
Ah, ah, ah, &c.

(*he puts the necklace round the Lady's neck; she starts up, and the double disappears on her way to the door.*)

HONESTA utters a shriek and rushes out of the arbour.

HON. (*with her veil raised.*) Heavens!

BRAN. What can be the matter?

HON. I cannot tell. I am stifled! This necklace presses on me like a heavy weight. (*she sits down on the R.*)

BRAN. (*with astonishment.*) The diamonds disagree with her. I never heard of such a thing happening to a woman before.

HON. (*rising.*) I am suffocated.

BRAN. Dear angel, it is only your emotion; I have agitated you too much! Let me give you a glass of water.

(*he takes up a bottle from the table, his eyes fixed on HONESTA during the whole time, blue and red flame issue from the bottle.*)

BRAN. Here, love.

HON. Thank you. (*she takes the glass.*) Heavens, this is fire.







BRAN. Fire! what do you mean?

HON. Here, in my bosom.

BRAN. Oh, nonsense.

HON. It is fire, I tell you.

BRAN. Here—help!

HON. Stop! I am calmer now. But it is strange the wonderful revolutions I have experienced.

BRAN. (*aside.*) Seriously, it must be the necklace. (*he goes towards her.*) Honesta, love, you had better let me take the necklace off.

HON. (*with a burst of passion, and putting her hands on her neck.*) Take back my diamonds, indeed—never.

(*she raises her head with a demeanour entirely opposite to that which she at first presented.*)

BRAN. (*with astonishment.*) Honesta! what does this mean?

HON. Oh, it merely means that I am going to keep the diamonds, and that I want twenty times as many besides. I must have diamond bracelets, a diamond head dress—diamond girdle, diamond rings, diamond brooches, diamonds every where in fact. Are you not aware that diamonds have always been my dream and my ambition, and that they must now form my happiness. What do you suppose my object in marrying you to have been? Nothing but affection for diamonds—and you would really take away my necklace. No, you shall take my life first.

(*she looks at him with a sort of menacing expression.*)

BRAN. (*with a little dismay.*) It appears that you have acquired the taste very suddenly.

HON. But that is not all. I must have magnificent dresses, the most expensive lace.

BRAN. You shall have all you wish, my dear. But what is the use of such things in this secluded villa?

HON. What is the use of them? Why to wear at the ball, to be sure. Are you not aware that we are going to give a ball to-night?

BRAN. We are going to give a ball to-night?

HON. Yes, and another to-morrow night—it is all arranged.

BRAN. What a strange idea! A ball composed of only us two! The company would be select but decidedly not numerous.



HON. But all the young men in the neighbourhood must come. (*anxiously.*) And above all do not forget the 25th Dragoons. You know they are stationed in the nearest town.

BRAN. (*in despair.*) She knows the 25th dragoons! (*controlling his temper.*) And so you know the 25th dragoons, my love?

HON. Yes. It was our favourite regiment at the convent.

BRAN. Did they give balls at the convent, then?

HON. Yes, every year, when the prizes were distributed. All the young ladies who gained prizes danced with the officers.

BRAN. What became of the young lady who received the prize for good behaviour?

HON. She danced with the colonel.

BRAN. (*with forced good humour.*) And you, my love, with whom did you dance?

HON. Oh, I used to dance always, over and over again, with Alberto.

BRAN. Oh, you danced always, over and over again with Alberto? And who is this coxcomb, pray?

HON. Coxcomb, indeed! I mean Alberto, who used to come to the convent every day to see his sister, and saw nobody but me. Oh, he is so fond of me, and swears to love me as long as he lives. How enraged he was when he heard of my marriage. He wanted to blow your brains out.

BRAN. Alberto wanted to blow my brains out?

HON. Yes, until he saw you; but then he did nothing but laugh. (*she begins laughing.*)

BRAN. I like that view of it better—no, on second thoughts, I don't like that view of it at all.

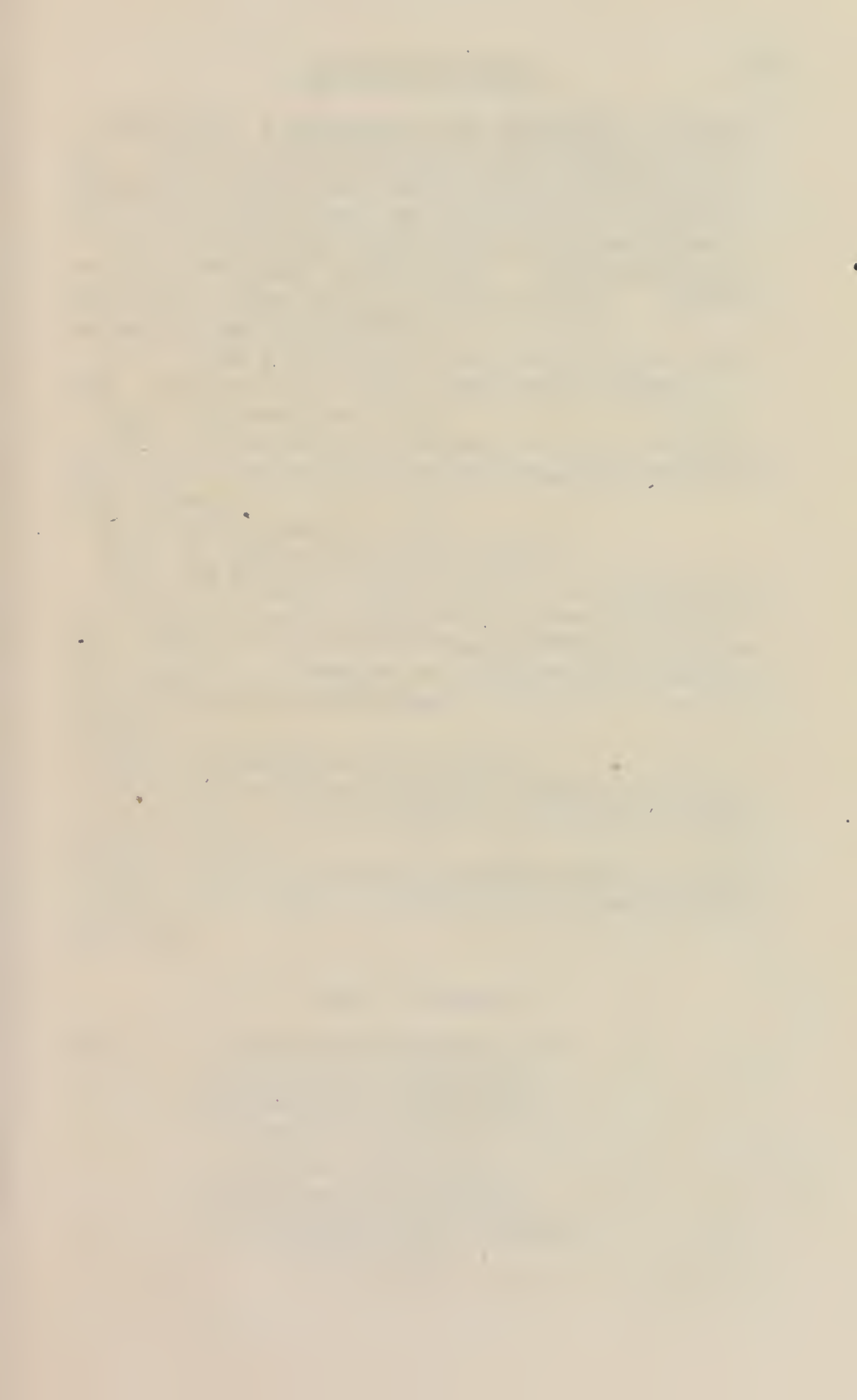
HON. Well, we must invite Alberto and all the regiment. Oh, how I shall enjoy myself.

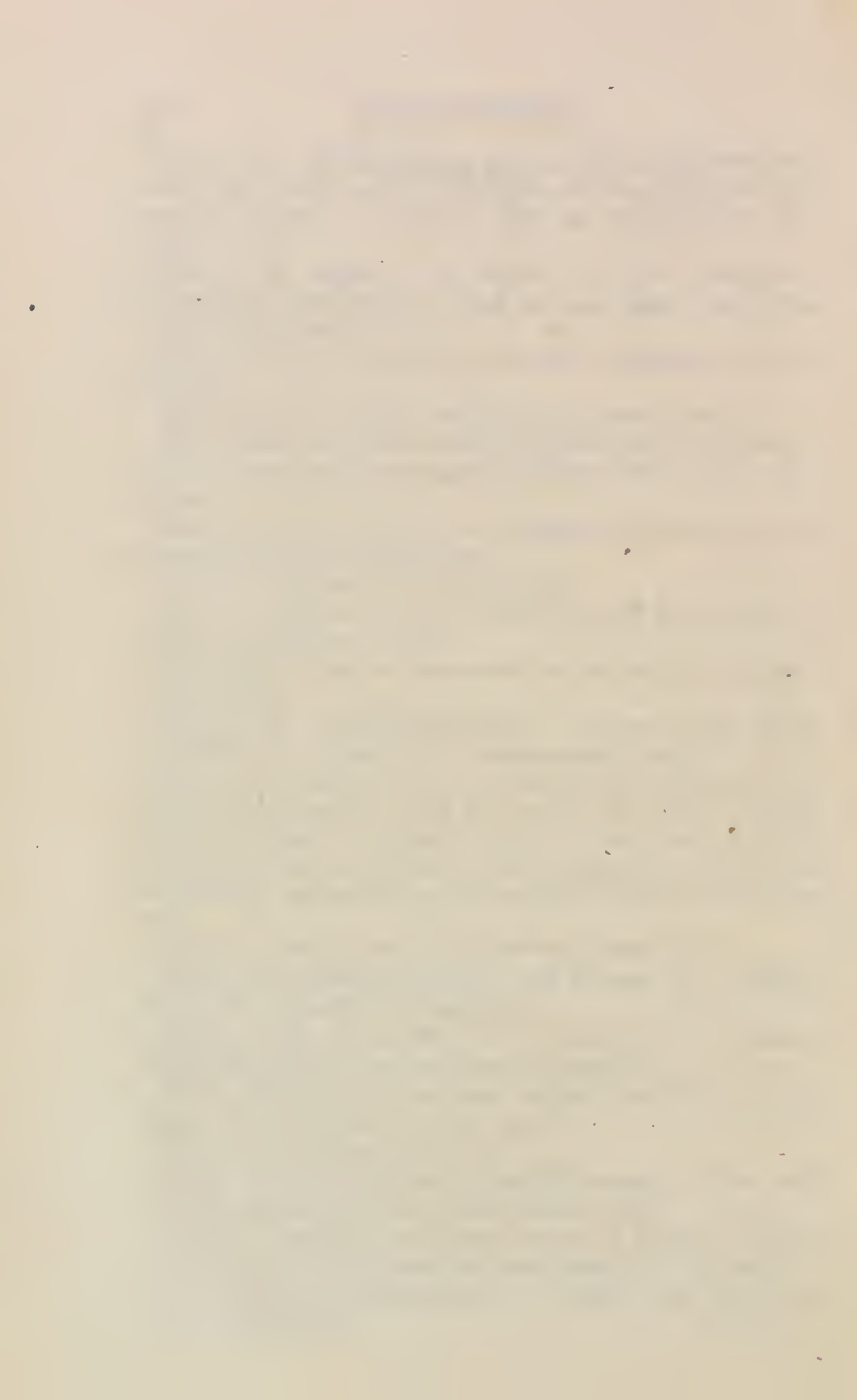
BRAN. And what shall I do?

HON. You will not enjoy yourself so much. You will sit down quietly in some corner of the room.

BRAN. (*laughing in a forced manner.*) What, I am to sit down quietly by myself in some corner of the room?

HON. Isn't that your place? Isn't it your duty to do so, as a husband?





BRAN. Yes, I understand the arrangement perfectly now. While you are dancing with the whole regiment of dragoons, I sit down very meekly at the end of the benches. One of the guests sees me, and says to his friend—"Who is that fellow moping away in the corner there?" "Only the husband," is the reply. "Ah, that's the husband, is it?—How are you, sir, how are you?" But don't let me interrupt you, madame.

HON. Well, I will tell you what must take place every day. In the morning I shall ride out with Alberto.

BRAN. And what am I to do?

HON. Oh, you can stop at home. In the evening we must have concerts and balls, and I shall sing and dance with Alberto.

BRAN. And what am I to do?

HON. Oh, you can go to bed, my dear.

BRAN. (*breaking out into a passion.*) You have deceived me, madame; and I perceive now that your white mouse was nothing more nor less than an officer of dragoons. But there is one obstacle—one small obstacle to all your arrangements, and this obstacle (*striking his breast.*) is myself.

HON. All obstacles must be removed.

BRAN. You will not remove me, madame—I defy you to remove me. From this day forth, you shall be locked up like a prisoner.

HON. And as you will lock yourself up with me, I will torment you to death, and then marry Alberto in your own villa.

### AIR,—“HERVE.”

BRAN.        You'll find you must obey me  
                  If sometimes you delay me,  
                  Not very long you'll stay me  
                  From what I have in view.  
                  And if you e'er resent it,  
                  You'll very soon repent it,  
                  And swear you never meant it,  
                  Or woe to you.

HON. Remember, if you've any nous,  
That I am mistress of the house ;  
To have fixed rules there'll be no cause,  
For all my wishes will be laws.  
To rise at noon—at night to dance,  
To smile and cast a kindly glance,  
Where'er I see a handsome man,  
Will form a portion of my plan.

BRAN. }  
HON. } (*together.*)——

I'll take care that you obey me ;  
If sometimes you delay me,  
You'll find you ne'er will stay me  
From what I have in view.  
And if you e'er resent it,  
&c., &c.

You'll find you must obey me,  
&c., &c., &c.

[*Exit HONESTA into villa, L. H.*]

BRAN. (*alone, and walking up and down the stage in the most excited state.*) To think that I am condemned to her for life. The very thought of the punishment makes me feel like a criminal. What horrible action shall I commit? I feel a strange desire to destroy one of my fellow-men. (*FIAMETTA appears, R.*) Unhappy being, do not approach me. (*recognises FIAMETTA.*) But no, this is not one of my fellow-men.

*Enter FIAMETTA, agitated as before, R.*

FIAM. The little wretch ! And I have been unable to find any revenge severe enough for him.

BRAN. (*looking at FIAMETTA.*) No matter, I must give way to my feelings. (*he kisses her hand, still without looking at her.*)

FIAM. Dear me !

BRAN. Dragoons, indeed ! (*kissing her hand again.*) There, again.

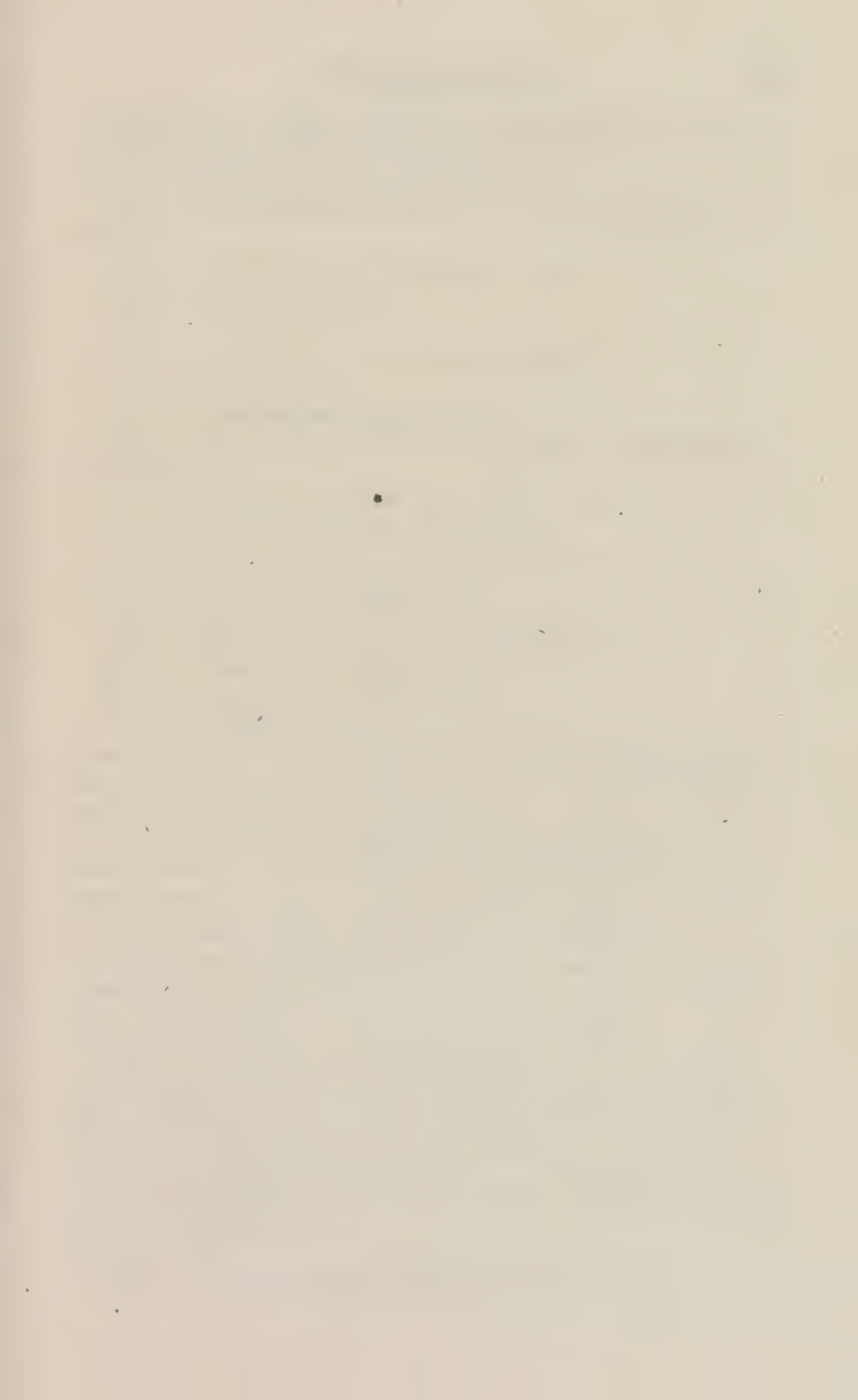
FIAM. Dear me ! dear me !













BRAN. Mr. Alberto, too, the coxcomb—I'll teach him.  
(*kisses her hand again.*) There, once more.

FIAM. Dear me! dear me! dear me!

BRAN. (*recognising FIAMETTA.*) Oh, was that you, my child?

FIAM. Yes, sir, each of the three times.

BRAN. Did I kiss you?

FIAM. I think so.

BRAN. It was because I was in a passion.

FIAM. I thought so.

BRAN. In a passion with my wife.

FIAM. How strange; for I'm in a dreadful passion with my husband.

BRAN. What I have just been doing, I did not for my own pleasure, but in order to punish her.

FIAM. And I allowed it, not for my own gratification, but in order to be revenged on him.

BRAN. Have you had sufficient revenge?

FIAM. Have you given her enough punishment?

BRAN. Once more. (*kisses her.*)

FIAM. (*approaching him.*) Twice more.

BRAN. (*stopping suddenly when he is about to kiss her a second time.*) But stop, Fiametta, we cannot continue this amusement in our present form for ever. Now, before we proceed any further, fancy yourself in my place, and tell me what you should say, if, after marrying a timid young creature whose only passion was for rearing white mice, what should you say if you found her all of a sudden possessed with a morbid passion for diamonds and dragoons?

FIAM. And what should you say if you had a husband who, after behaving like a spooney young lamb for eight days, suddenly took a stick to you on the ninth?

BRAN. I should say, Fiametta, that it was very extraordinary, and that there must be something in it. If there were still such things as fairies—fairies being supernatural beings—the whole affair might be explained; but the order having been abolished——

FIAM. (*suddenly.*) Oh, my Heavens! you said there must be something it.

BRAN. Well?

FIAM. (*in a low voice.*) Perhaps it is the devil!

BRAN. Your hypothesis, Fiametta, is ridiculous, and can only be excused by reason of your very limited intelligence. If you had the least acquaintance with philosophy, you would know that it could not be the devil.

*Music.*—MEPHISTOPHELES rises suddenly through shooting trap.

MEPH. (c.) Indeed!

FIAM. }  
BRAN. } Good Heavens!

BRAN. Well, sir, you might have sent up your card.

MEPH. Fear nothing. I am the best-natured devil possible, and am here merely on a philanthropic mission.

FIAM. }  
BRAN. } What?

MEPH. The Infernal Association for the advancement of science, taking notice of the large number of married couples sent down to the lower world, gave me, Mephistopheles, the following question to answer—"Do the husbands cause the destruction of their wives, or do the wives cause the destruction of their husbands?" Now which do you accuse?

FIAM. The husbands!

BRAN. No, the wives! You may tell the Honourable President of the Infernal Association that, upon my honour, it is all done with the wives.

MEPH. Well, you are right.

FIAM. You mean that *I* am.

BRAN. No, I.

MEPH. I mean both of you. That is the result of the experiments I have just been making with you.

BRAN. With us?

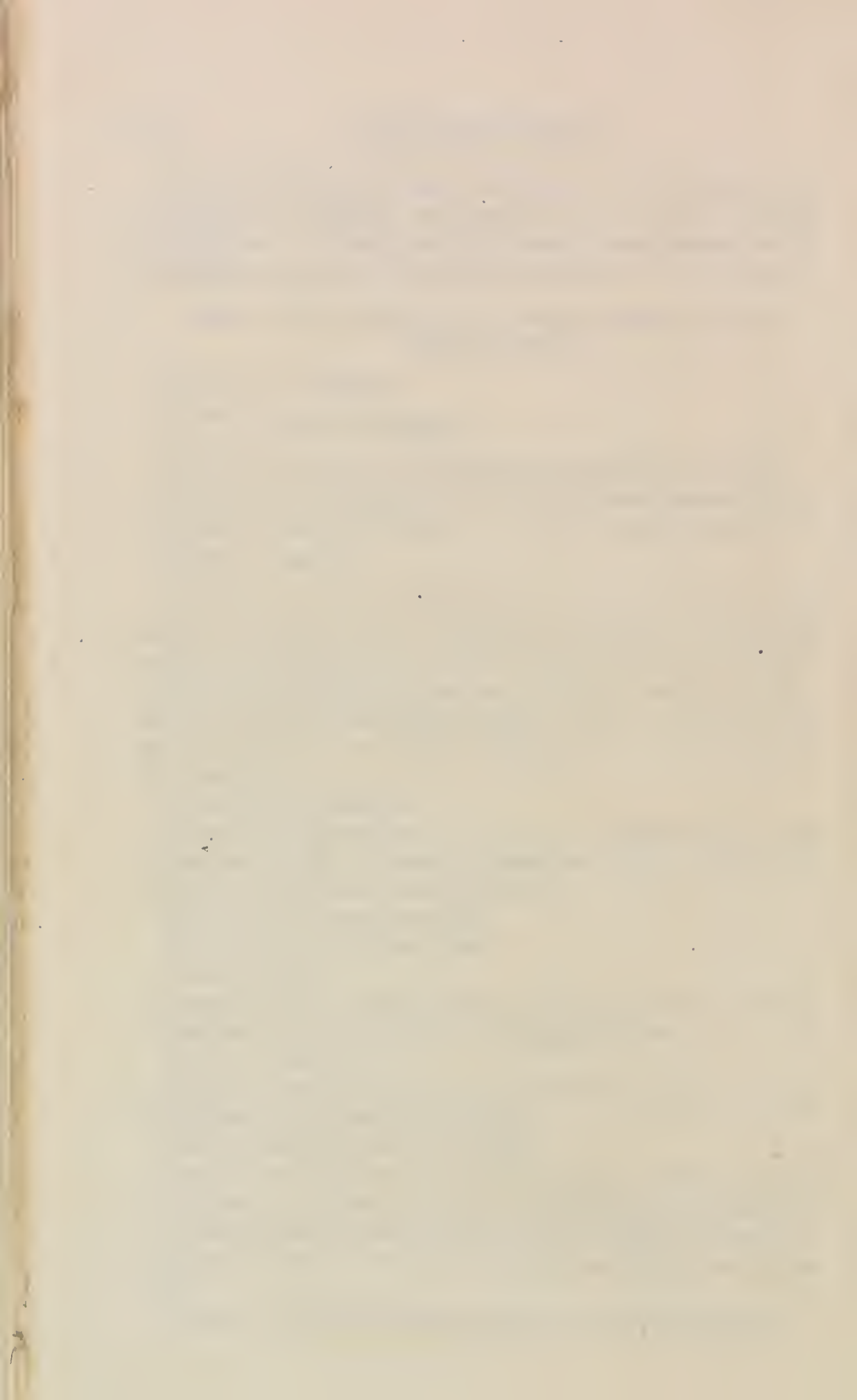
MEPH. Yes, indirectly. You did not recognise me in the persons of Pepito and Honesta.

FIAM. In the person of Pepito?

BRAN. And do you mean to say that you had the impertinence to choose my wife for a place of residence? She never told me where you were lodging, though I certainly thought she had something strange in her upper story.

MEPH. Do you remember Alberto and the dragoons?







BRAN. Rather—the devil!

FIAM. (*anxiously*) And Pepito's stick?

MEPH. Rather.

FIAM. (*looking towards the cottage.*) Dear little Pepito!

BRAN. (*looking the other way.*) Charming little angel!

MEPH. Come, come, you had better enjoy the honeymoon while you can. You are not through the first quarter yet. (*laughing.*) But, Fiametta, suppose some time hence, when your husband's affection for you has ceased—say in three months—suppose, when you fancy him fast asleep and dreaming of you, I inform you that in fact he is only thinking of some excuse to enable him to go to the village fête by himself?

FIAM. I shall know how to believe you another time.

MEPH. If at the same time, I were to whisper, to the chagrin of Brancador, that his timid little dove, whom he believed to be still in her nest, had in reality taken wing—what would he reply?

BRAN. What would I reply? Why I should reply—(*he goes to back of stage. Several SERVANTS come out of the villa bearing lights. BRANCADOR takes one of them, and approaches MEPHISTOPHELES with an air of satisfaction.*) I should reply——

AIR,—“*Good night, Signor Pantalon.*”

BRAN. Good night, Signor Mephistopheles—

I can trust to my wife's constant love,

And an angel believe with more ease,

Than a gent who is not from above—

Good night, Signor Mephistopheles.

FIAM. Good night, Signor Mephistopheles—

My husband, what sir, you may say,

Only thinks that some terrible tease

Is keeping me too long away.

Good night, Signor Mephistopheles.

MEPH. (*discomforted.*)——

Good night, Signor Mephistopheles—

Let me hope that you will be more polite;



And allow me to say, if you please,  
Au revoir—till some other night.

BRAN. }  
FIAM. } Good night, Signor Mephistopheles!

(BRANCADOR and FIAMETTA bow politely to MEPHISTOPHELES, who sinks through dahlias as CURTAIN descends.







